

THE CHESTER BEATTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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THE ROYAL CANCER HOSPITAL,
FULHAM ROAD,
LONDON, S. W. 3.

8th May, 1951.

Professor J. Lederberg,
College of Agriculture,
University of Wisconsin,
Madison 6,
U.S.A.

Dear Professor Lederberg,

Thank you for your letter dated 9th April: I
enclose the reprint requested.

The results which you quote are interesting and underline the dangers in looking for too high a degree of concordance in the response to chemical mutagens evoked in such widely different biological systems as are currently employed in this type of work, e.g. bacteria, fungi, *Drosophila* and plant meristems. Certainly the highly reactive alkylating agents of the mustard and epoxide type seem to produce a universal response but in our experience, with plant meristems and animal tumours, this is confined to substances which readily esterify ionised acids. Thus aldehydes and acid anhydrides which will react -OH or -NH₂ do not produce similar effects. When one comes to mutation produced by metabolite antagonists the divergence is, not unexpectedly, wider.

I look forward to reading your published results.

Yours sincerely,



Anthony Loveless.